IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-22 (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A process for fermentatively preparing an L-amino acid, comprising

fermenting a modified microorganism of the genus Escherichia which already produces L-amino acids before being modified for a time and under conditions suitable for the production of the L-amino acid;

concentrating the L-amino acid in the medium or ~~from~~ in the Escherichia cells;

determining the concentration of the L-amino acids produced; and

isolating the concentrated L-amino acid from the medium or from the Escherichia cells,

wherein said modified microorganism comprises an inactivated poxB gene which prior to inactivation encodes a pyruvate oxidase, wherein inactivation is achieved by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the poxB gene, insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the poxB gene, and transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the poxB gene, ~~wherein the poxB gene is obtainable by PCR amplification using SEQ ID NO:5 and SEQ ID NO:8~~ wherein the poxB gene prior to being inactivated comprises a polynucleotide sequence encoding a protein comprising SEQ ID NO:2.

Claim 24 (cancelled).

25. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine, L-valine, L-lysine, L-isoleucine, L-methionine, or L-homoserine.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-valine.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-lysine.

Claim 29-32 (Cancelled).

33. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified microorganism is *Escherichia coli*.

Claim 34 (Cancelled).

35. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified microorganism is MG442ΔpoxB transformed with plasmid pMW218gdhA.

36. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified microorganism is MG442ΔpoxB transformed with plasmid pMW219rhtC.

37. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 28, wherein the modified microorganism is TOC21RΔpoxB.

38. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 27, wherein the modified microorganism is B-12288ΔpoxB.

39. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the poxB gene.

40. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination.

41. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the poxB gene.

42. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein the poxB gene prior to being inactivated comprises SEQ ID NO:1.

Claim 43 (Cancelled).